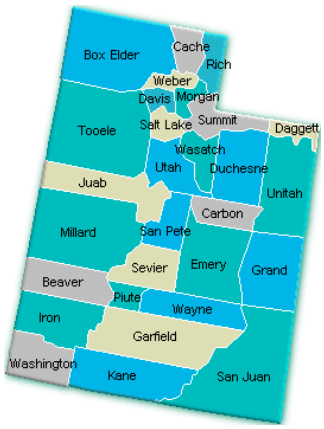
Cropland—Irrigated Ranking Tool Questions and Instructions

2008-Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Note to all users: The **official** Application and Evaluation Ranking Tools are located in Protracts.



USDA-NRCS—Salt Lake City, Utah

References:

- http://www.ut.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/
- EFOTG
- CPM 440—Part 512 CPC
- CPM 440-Part 515 EQIP
- TMDL or Listed Watersheds:
- National Planning Procedures Handbook (NPPH)
- UT Bulletins
- Area Agronomist
- **Technical questions on this ranking tool should be directed to Area Technical and Program Specialists.**

National At-Risk species Resource Concerns

- Plant Condition; Threatened and Endangered Plant Species
- Plant Condition; T&E Plant Species: Declining Species, Species of Concern
- Fish and Wildlife; Threatened and Endangered Fish and Wildlife Species
- Fish and Wildlife; T&E Species: Declining Species, Species of Concern

NATIONAL Priority Issues

Question 1: Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in considerable reductions of non-point source pollution, such as nutrients, sediment, pesticides, excess salinity in impaired watersheds consistent with TMDL's where available as well as the reduction of groundwater contamination or point source such as contamination from confined animal feeding operations?

- To claim these points, the proposed project must be expected to meet Quality Criteria for all applicable NRCS Water Quality criteria.

Question 2: Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the conservation of a considerable amount of ground or surface water resources?

- To claim these points, the proposed project must be expected to meet Quality Criteria for all applicable NRCS Water Quantity criteria.

Question 3: Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable reduction of emissions, such as particulate matter, nitrogen oxides (NOx), volatile organic compounds, and ozone precursors and depleters that contribute to air quality impairment violations of National Ambient Air Quality Standards?

- To claim these points, the proposed project must include one or more of the conservation practices on page 4. (This is NOT the list of eligible practices.)

Question 4: Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation from unacceptable levels on agricultural land?

- To claim these points, soil erosion must go from above T to T or below T as a result of the proposed project OR Quality criteria for Soil Condition must be met as a result of implementing the proposed project.

Question 5: Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?

- To claim these points, the project must be expected to meet Quality Criteria for one or more of the four national at-risk species resource concerns (see list, left sidebar).

At-risk plant species are in Appendix C. - Rare Plant Species by Habitat Type
At-risk animal species are in Appendix A. - Utah CWCS Tier I, II, and III Species List.
See Utah-NRCS Website—Programs-EQIP tab.

STATE Priority Issues Questions and Rules

Question 1: Does the cooperator have a current RMS plan on the CTU for the EQIP project ?

- To claim these points, the applicant must have an RMS plan which addresses all resource concerns on the Conservation Treatment Unit (CTU) being offered for EQIP funding. (NPPH Amendment 3, 600.6-4)

STATE Priority Issues, continued

Question 2: Does the cooperator have one or more active contracts that are behind schedule?

- Review 440-CPM, 512 and CCC-1200 Appendix signed by participant. Behind schedule is defined as an unapplied practice scheduled to have been installed prior to date of ranking.

Question 3: Does the applicant have one or more contracts that have been cancelled, or terminated (or are currently in the process of being cancelled/terminated)?

- Answer as appropriate.

Question 4: Does the plan address control of an invasive species identified by a state, county, or local government or by a local Cooperative Weed Management Area as being a noxious species?

- Identify if the target species identified by the applicant is listed as noxious and/or invasive. Control of these species must be addressed THROUGH THE APPROPRIATE PRACTICES in the contract if answered yes.

Question 5: Is this project in an area that is covered by an approved areawide plan as defined by the National Planning Procedures Handbook?

- Is the planned project in an approved area wide plan as defined by the National Planning Procedures Handbook, and been designated as such by the Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations? In order to answer yes to this question all of these REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET.

Question 6: Is the project located in a watershed of a nutrient impaired TMDL or [303(d) listed] water body (lake, stream, reservoir or TMDL impaired watershed)?

- To claim points for this question, the applicants project must be located within the impaired watershed or upstream of a 303(d) listed stream segment or water body. The project being implemented must provide measurable benefits to the reduction of non-point source pollutants for which the TMDL or 303(d) listing was established.

Answer either #7 or #8, not both. If not applicable (ie, no runoff), do not claim points.

Question 7: If this project is implemented, will runoff that previously left the property and entered a waterway be kept on the property, or will run through a filter strip meeting 393 practice standard?

Question 8: If this project is implemented, will runoff that previously left the property but did not enter a waterway be kept on the property?

EQIP National Priorities

1. Reductions of **nonpoint source** pollution, such as nutrients, sediment, pesticides, or excess salinity in impaired watersheds consistent with TMDLs where available as well as the reduction of groundwater contamination and reduction of point sources such as contamination from confined animal feeding operations;
2. Conservation of **ground and surface water** resources;
3. Reduction of **emissions**, such as particulate matter, nitrogen oxides (NOx), volatile organic compounds, and ozone precursors and depleters that contribute to air quality impairment violations of National Ambient Air Quality Standards;
4. Reduction in **soil erosion and sedimentation** from unacceptable levels on agricultural land; and
5. Promotion of **at-risk species** habitat conservation.

Question 9 : Will Irrigation Water Management be applied for 3 or more years? (will be contracted)

- **Answer as appropriate.**

Question 10: Will Nutrient Management be applied for 3 or more years? (will be contracted)

- **Answer as appropriate.**

Question 11: Will Pest Management be applied for 3 or more years? (will be contracted)

- **Answer as appropriate.**

Questions 12-16: Major Soil Suitability classes

- **Document soil class using soil survey or Toolkit using the soil layer. If the soil capability class or sub-class is not listed in the ranking tool then it is** answered as #10 (Major soil some other capability classes and sub class).

Question 17: Project is being ranked as a Joint agreement (group project) where two or more eligible operators on two or more farms, intending to substantially pool resources, efforts, finances or other contributions to mutually address the same resource concerns which will result in greater environmental benefits than individual participation.

- **Answer as appropriate.**

Questions 18-42: Cost Effectiveness Points for Structural Practices.

- **Cost to NRCS of structural practice(s) ONLY. Do not count the cost or acres of the management practices.**
- **Cost effectiveness will be calculated based on the acres being treated by the structural practice.**

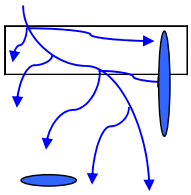
Questions 43-62: System Improvement.

- **Use your professional judgment to choose the picture/description that best matches the type of irrigation method in the field.**

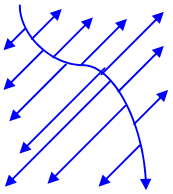
- **Rank for the system that treats a majority of the land. For example, if you're planning on a 130-acre pivot and a 32-acre wheel line choose the irrigation efficiency for the pivot.**

FLOOD IRRIGATION METHODS

Use your professional judgment to choose the picture/description below that best matches the type of irrigation method in the field.

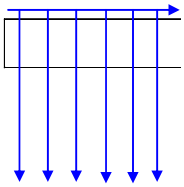


Uncontrolled Flood
Ridge
Irrigation



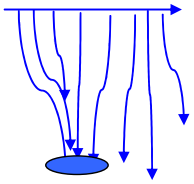
Controlled Flood

Ridge irrigation using concrete ditch, gated pipe, etc.

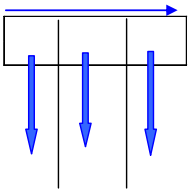


Controlled Flood

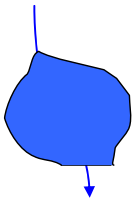
Earth ditch, Gated Pipe, Corrigations, Furrow, etc.
Furrow Graded
< 2% Slope



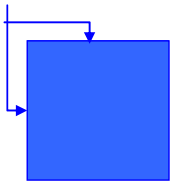
Uncontrolled Flood
Unlevel, no furrow, no Corrigations, etc.



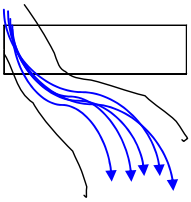
Controlled Flood
Borders, etc.
Border Graded
<= .5% slope



Uncontrolled Flood
Dam and flood



Level Basin
<= .03% slope



Uncontrolled Flood
Turn water out and let it go.

Conservation Practices—to claim points for National Priority Question #3, the proposed project must include one or more of the following practices:

- Access Road (560)
- Irrigation System, Surface and Subsurface (443)
- Alley Cropping (311)
- Irrigation Water Management (449)
- Amendments for the Treatment of Agricultural Waste (591)
- Mulching (484)
- Anaerobic Digester, Controlled Temperature (366)
- Nutrient Management (590)
- Animal Mortality Facility (316)
- Pasture and Hay Planting (512)
- Anionic Polyacrylamide (PAM) Erosion Control (450)
- Pest Management (595)
- Atmospheric Resource Quality Management (370)
- Prescribed Burning (338)
- Closure of Waste Impoundment (360)
- Prescribed Grazing (528)
- Composting Facility (317)
- Pumping Plant (533)
- Conservation Cover (327)
- Range Planting (550)
- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Recreation Area Improvement (562)
- Constructed Wetland (656)
- Recreation Land Grading and Shaping (566)
- Contour Buffer Strips (332)
- Recreation Trail and Walkway (568)
- Contour Farming (330)
- Residue Management, Seasonal (344)
- Contour Orchard and Other Fruit Area (331)
- Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390)
- Cross Wind Ridges (589A)
- Rock Barrier (555)
- Cross Wind Trap Strips (589C)
- Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
- Deep Tillage (324)
- Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)
- Drainage Water Management (554)
- Stripcropping (585)
- Feed Management (592)
- Surface Roughening (609)
- Field Border (386)
- Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
- Filter Strip (393)
- Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
- Firebreak (394)
- Use Exclusion (472)
- Forest Site Preparation (490)
- Vegetative Barrier (601)
- Forest Stand Improvement (666)
- Waste Facility Cover (367)
- Fuel Break (383)
- Waste Storage Facility (313)
- Grassed Waterway (412)
- Waste Treatment Lagoon (359)
- Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment (548)
- Waste Utilization (633)
- Heavy Use Area Protection (561)
- Wastewater Treatment Strip (635)
- Hedgerow Planting (422)
- Wetland Creation (658)
- Herbaceous Wind Barriers (603)
- Wetland Enhancement (659)
- Irrigation Canal or Lateral (320)
- Wetland Restoration (657)
- Irrigation Field Ditch (388)
- Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)
- Irrigation System, Microirrigation (441)
- Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)
- Irrigation System, Sprinkler (442)
- Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation (650)